

Message Text

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TAGS SHUM, AR, MORG, MARR, PARM, TECH, MNUC
SUBJECT JUNTA AFFIRMS RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO AND
TIMERMANS TRANSFER; NAVY TO PARTICIPATE IN UNITAS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2018 (NOTAL)

1. TLATELOLCO RATIFICATION-----
NAVY COMMANDER IN CHIEF MASSERA INFORMED EMBASSY
TODAY (MARCH 31) THAT JUNTA AGREED LAST NIGHT TO
GOA RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO TREATY. MASSERA
SAID THAT THE MAJOR PROBLEM NOW WAS TO FIND AN
APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY TO PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE
THE GOAS DECISION. HE NOTED THAT ONE POSSIBILITY UNDER STUDY
WOULD BE TO HAVE THE ARGENTINE RATIFICATION ANNOUNCED
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DURING THE UPCOMING UN DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

2. TIMERMAN TRANSFER-----
ADMIRAL MASSERA STATED THAT THE JUNTA HAD AGREED WITH THE
NAVY PROPOSAL TO PLACE JACOBO TIMERMAN UNDER HOUSE ARREST.
HE SAID THE ACTUAL TRANSFER WILL TAKE PLACE IN A WEEK TO
15 DAYS AS THE ARMY REQUESTED TIME TO INFORM ITS OFFICERS

OF THE TIMERMAN DECISION. THE ADMIRAL NOTED THAT THE NAVY SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE, BUT THERE ARE VARIOUS SECTORS OF OPINION IN THE ARMY WHICH MUST INFORMED.

3. UNITAS-----

ADMIRAL MASSERA SAID THAT ON HIS WAY TO SAUDI ARABIA HE WOULD STOP IN BRAZIL FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH HIS CLOSE COLLEAGUE, THE BRAZILIAN NAVAL CHIEF OF STAFF. AT THAT TIME, MASSERA SAID HE WOULD INFORM THE BRAZILIANS THAT AS RELATIONS WERE IMPROVING BETWEEN THE US AND ARGENTINA, THE ARGENTINE NAVY HAD DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE UPCOMING UNITAS EXERCISE. MASSERA ADDED THAT ARGENTINA DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN LAST YEARS OPERATIONS FOR POLITICAL REASONS. HE THEN NOTED, AS A SEPARATE TOPIC, THE APPROVAL OF SALE OF 15 T-34C TRAINER AIRCRAFT TO THE NAVY.

4. IN CONCLUSION, ADMIRAL MASSERA REQUESTED THAT THIS INFORMATION BE CLOSELY HELD, ESPECIALLY FROM THE OTHER ARGENTINE MILITARY SERVICES.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: THE JUNTA HELD A THREE HOUR MEETING LAST NIGHT (MARCH 30) TO DECIDE A NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES BEFORE ITS AIR FORCE AND NAVY MEMBERS LEFT FOR THE US AND SAUDI ARABIA RESPECTIVELY. ADMIRAL MASSERAS WISH TO BE THE FIRST TO INFORM THE USG OF THE POSITIVE JUNTA DECISIONS ON TLATELOLCO AND TIMERMAN IS
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ANOTHER INDICATION OF HIS INTEREST IN IMPROVING HIS PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HIS DECISION THAT THE ARGENTINE NAVY WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE 1978 UNITAS EXERCISES AND THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD RELAY THIS INFORMATION TO HIS BRAZILIAN COUNTERPART APPEAR TO THE EMBASSY TO BE A DIRECT AND POSITIVE REPLY FROM MASSERA TO THE DEPARTMENTS DECISION TO PERMIT THE T-34C NAVY TRAINER AIRCRAFT SALE TO GO THROUGH. MOTIVATED AS HE IS BY HIS PERSONAL POLITICAL AMBITIONS, MASSERA WISHES TO GARNER MAXIMUM CREDIT FOR HIMSELF AND THE NAVY FOR THESE IMPORTANT POSITIVE STEPS. WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY HIS STATEMENTS AND ARE SEEKING ADDITIONAL CONFIRMATION.

6. FROM MASSERAS AND OTHERS COMMENTS, IT SEEMS THE GOA MAY BE SEEKING TO ANNOUNCE ITS RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MINIMIZE THE APPEARANCE OF US PRESSURE.
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